

# ☹Cyber Bully☹



*Don't let your child be a victim of the newest form of bullying. Cyber bullying involves sending information through technologies such as email, cell phones, instant message and websites to intentionally harm another person.*

## WHAT PARENTS CAN DO

### Get involved and be aware

- Learn everything you can about the Internet and what your kids are doing online. Talk to them about the places they go online and the activities that they are involved in.
- Encourage your kids to come to you if anybody says or does something online that makes them feel uncomfortable or threatened.

### Encourage kids to develop their own moral code so they will *choose* to behave ethically online.

- Talk to your kids about responsible Internet use.
- Teach them to never post or say anything on the Internet that they wouldn't want the whole world - including you - to read.
- Create an online agreement or contract for computer use, with your kids' input. Make sure your agreement contains clear rules about ethical online behavior.

### Take action if your child is being bullied online

- Watch out for signs that your child is being bullied online – a reluctance to use the computer or go to school may be an indication.
- If the bully is a student at your child's school, meet with school officials and ask for help in resolving the situation.
- Report any incident of online harassment and physical threats to your local police and your Internet Service Provider (ISP).
- If your child is bullied through a mobile phone, report the problem to your phone service provider. If it's a persistent problem you can change the phone number.

## WHAT KIDS CAN DO

### Guard your contact information. Don't give people you don't know your cell phone number, instant messaging name or email address.

- Learn to protect yourself online and respond to cyber bullying among peers when they encounter it.

### If you are being harassed online, take the following actions immediately:

- Tell an adult you trust – a teacher, parent, older sibling or grandparent.
- If you are being harassed, leave the area or stop the activity (i.e. chat room, news group, online gaming area, instant messaging, etc.).
- If you are being bullied through email or instant messaging, block the sender's messages. Never reply to harassing messages.
- Save any harassing messages and forward them to your Internet Service Provider (i.e. Hotmail or Yahoo). Most service providers have appropriate use policies that restrict users from harassing others over the Internet – and that includes kids
- If the bullying includes physical threats, tell the police as well.

Take a stand against cyber bullying with your peers. Speak out whenever you see someone being mean to another person online. Most kids respond better to criticism from their peers than to disapproval from adults.

Media Awareness Network (2004). *Challenging Cyber Bullying*. Ottawa: MNet. <http://www.media-awareness.ca>, adapted with permission *Challenging Cyber Bullying* [http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/resources/special\\_initiatives/wa\\_resources/wa\\_shared/backgrounders/challenge\\_cyber\\_bullying.cfm](http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/resources/special_initiatives/wa_resources/wa_shared/backgrounders/challenge_cyber_bullying.cfm)